

# Quest STRATEGIC ADVISOR

www.questsys.com

Quest | CASE STUDY

## Quest provides the deep expertise City of Concord needs

There's a lot going on these days in the City of Concord, California's information technology department.

"It's time for our network equipment to be replaced," explains Ron Puccinelli, the City of Concord's director of information technology. "All of our technology supporting the city is on a replacement cycle. The network gear is now just about five years old."



### Filling the skills gap

As part of this effort, Ron's group also is spearheading a transition from a traditional time-division multiplexing private branch exchange (TDM/PBX) telephone system to a more modern – and far more cost-effective – voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) alternative.

"And VoIP," Ron observes, "obviously takes a solid, robust network."

Ron and his crew find themselves looking at a network redesign. But who's going to do it?

"The types of people we need – those able to do serious senior level work – are either out of our price

"Every time we've used their services, every time we have an urgent or emergency situation come up," he continues, "they've always responded very professionally, very promptly. Quest has always gotten us through whatever the situation. We are highly confident that the people Quest sends us are the right people for the job. And so far we have never been disappointed."

Ron offers particular accolades for his Quest account support team.

"I can call or shoot an e-mail to Justin Trammell and the other folks who are behind the scenes and with-

### THE BOTTOM LINE

A high-skill level project. A limited personnel budget. Quest delivers a solution to both issues for the City of Concord.

range or they're already engaged," Ron says.

So Ron turned to Quest to "fill the skills gap," contracting with the company for the senior network talent he needed for help with the network redesign.

Ron's decision makes good sense for several reasons.

### Why Quest? It's the relationship

Quest's experts designed the city's current network. "So we already have a very solid track record with Quest," Ron points out.

### IN THIS ISSUE

Highly skilled IT personnel are again scarce and costly. And you don't always need deep expertise on a daily basis. What are the alternatives to a budget busting head count?

**2** From Tim Burke: Year-end review: taking inventory

**3** Profile: Quest's Network Management Services

**3** Did you know? Outdated network design equals overpriced, under-performing network infrastructures

**4** What's new... Network design: areas where organizations can save money

CITY OF CONCORD (Continued from p. 1)

in a few hours I'll have a response," Ron says. "If they don't have an immediate answer they'll tell me and get back when they promise — being able to count on that is so important."

**Why Quest? It's more cost-effective** Contracting expertise from Quest is, Ron believes, more cost-effective.

"We don't have this kind of senior need forever," he says. "It's somewhat periodic and when we need it, we really need someone who is a 'deep-dive'-expert."

**"I can ask Quest about any topic and they come back with a range of options — they give unbiased analysis."**

— Ron Puccinelli

Ron estimates that if he had hired a fulltime employee with the expertise and experience needed for the network redesign, "we would have had to pay them two or three times what we could afford. What's more," he adds, "on a long-term basis, we couldn't possibly provide someone like that with the kind of work that would keep them engaged and interested."

In addition, Quest is handling the city's purchase of Cisco equipment, an often surprisingly complex process. Quest is also handling the support and maintenance contract associated with the purchase.

**Why Quest? It's the trustworthy support**

The City of Concord's relationship

FROM TIM BURKE...

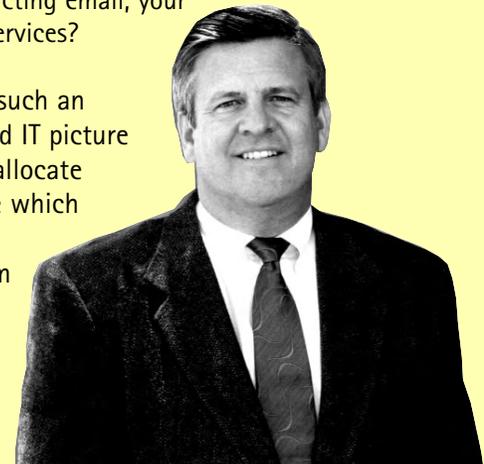
## Year-end review: taking inventory

**A**s the year ends, we encourage you to take a step back from your day-to-day challenges, assess the current state of your information technology, and consider where you'd like to be a year from now.

But where to start? My advice: go back to basics. Examine the performance of your core functionality, asking these questions about:

- \* The overall health of your network. Have you been diligent in monitoring and maintaining your infrastructure? Will your network be up to your 2007 performance-level needs?
- \* Security. Are your procedures and processes in place and up-to-date?
- \* Application performance. Is your user community happy with your systems and network response times?
- \* Backup, recovery, and business continuity. Do you know how you'll continue to do business if a major system — including servers — goes down? Are you prepared to recover from failures impacting email, your phone system, customer-facing web services?

Using independent expertise to conduct such an assessment will give you a clear, unbiased IT picture and help you decide where you need to allocate resources. It can also help you determine which issues are best resolved in-house and where your organization can benefit from additional independent expertise.



with Quest continues to evolve. A Quest business continuity planning expert is currently helping the city create its first business continuity plan. And Ron expects to be using Quest's Network Monitoring and Management service soon, pointing out that "if you keep up with your equipment refresh cycles, your infrastructure lasts longer, gives you less problems, and costs less in the long run," he says.

Good advice. And that's something else Ron can rely on from Quest's people.

"I can ask the Quest folks a general question about any particular technical topic," Ron explains, "and they always come back with a broad range of options. They don't push any vendor — instead they give you an unbiased analysis of what their client base is doing and what similar-sized organizations are having success with. It's all good advice, good information — and it adds up to a track record of good support we can trust."

## Quest's Network Management Services:

# Proactive monitoring can boost IT performance

Fully 40 percent of operational downtime is caused by poor design and system capacity problems. And poorly performing IT applications are costing the world's industrialized nations some \$85 billion every year.

As systems, networks, and applications become more sophisticated and interdependent, much greater expertise is required to successfully diagnose and fix increasingly complex performance and availability issues.

### Bottom-line benefits

And as your business becomes more reliant on these systems, networks, and applications, it's worthwhile to head off problems by first optimizing and then constantly monitoring and managing your data, Internet, voice, wireless, and cable infrastructure.

With a combination of Quest's monitoring and management services customized to your organization's needs, you'll be able to

- Ensure optimal response times
- Prevent downtime
- Identify root causes of problems and expedite troubleshooting
- Protect assets
- Reduce compliance costs

### A full gamut of monitoring/management services

After rigorously testing your IT environment and providing specific recommendations, Quest's Network Management Services professionals work as part of your IT team so you get the full benefit of state-of-the-art expertise and access to a full gamut of monitoring/management services, including

- \* **Network Monitoring:** total network visibility via proactively and comprehensively managing activity and performance across complex networks.
- \* **On-site or Remote Network Health Monitoring:** track network activity using dedicated tools and staff to detect anomalies and record overall network performance.

- \* **Application Monitoring:** optimize visibility, control, and reliable delivery of applications by identifying, monitoring, and managing application flow across the network.

- \* **Fault Prevention:** head off outages by discovering performance issues and taking corrective action before outages occur.

- \* **Custom Reporting:** analyze the patterns, activities, and potential vulnerabilities gleaned from statistical, logging, and graphical data.

## DID-YOU-KNOW?

### Gartner: dispersed users need new network infrastructure

Businesses are in danger of mispending on their networks, say Gartner analysts, because they implement outdated network design and procurement practices that result in overpriced network infrastructures that under-perform.

"The majority of network designers continue to be caught in traditional design practices, building and upgrading the network equates to something that's bigger and faster," says Mark Fabbi, vice president and distinguished analyst at Gartner. "They continue to spend money on bigger and faster core networking technologies at their headquarters and large locations that don't actually serve the user population."

### Time to shift focus

To bring new capabilities to the infrastructure, note Gartner analysts, IT managers must shift their focus to providing services to a distributed workforce.

"Most businesses have an increasing number of users in remote locations ... so high investments in LANs are totally missing the point," Fabbi says. "By designing networks that map to actual user requirements, rather than falling into the trap of buying the next new thing, businesses could recoup substantial capital dollars that can be redeployed in areas where they actually make a difference."

Coming in the next issue of *Quest Strategic Advisor*:

## Case study of BI Nutraceuticals

# What's New...

An estimated \$100 billion will be wasted by IT over the next five years because of overspending on network products and services.

So said Gartner analysts Mark Fabbi and Bob Hafner during an October Gartner Symposium/ITxpo presentation on network design. The two analysts then delineated areas where organizations can save money, including

- ➔ **'Bandwidth arbitrage'** – that is, push more traffic over the public Internet rather than running all WAN traffic over a service provider's MPLS network.
- ➔ **WAN optimization**, which, according to Gartner, can reduce traffic by 60-to-80 percent, allowing companies to defer purchase of additional bandwidth for three-plus years – even though bandwidth needs will continue accelerating at 35 percent a year.
- ➔ **Desk phones** that, believes Gartner, will be gone forever in five to ten years – making investments in IP phones with display screens wasteful, especially when the money can be spent on productivity-improving unified communications applications.
- ➔ **Focusing on a better business, not a better network** by using money saved on the likes of bandwidth costs to invest in such technologies as application acceleration, unified communications, mobility, and voice-over-WLAN.



© 2006 Ted Goff from cartoonbank.com. All rights reserved.

## ON THE CALENDAR

### Upcoming Quest Events

**Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery (BCP/DR) Lunch Briefing:** Hosted by Quest, these informative sessions will discuss the importance of a business continuity/disaster recovery plan and how to implement it into your business model. Santa Barbara, CA 1/18/07, Eureka, CA 1/25/07, Riverside, CA 2/1/07, Salem, OR 2/7/07, Portland, OR 2/8/07, Irvine, CA 2/22/07, San Diego, CA 3/1/07, Santa Rosa, CA 3/8/07.

**Desktop Encryption Services Lunch Briefing:** Hosted by Quest, this educational session will explore different encryption options especially for vulnerable corporate assets like laptops in case they are lost or stolen. Maintain control of your company's and customers' sensitive data – even if you no longer have the device. Call us for upcoming events scheduled in the following cities: Sacramento, Boise, Redwood City, Modesto, Reno, Redding, Bakersfield, Santa Rosa, Eureka, Riverside, Salem, Portland, Irvine, San Diego.

**Cisco Call Manager/Unity** (includes both CCMSA v4.1 and UCSA v1.3): 12/18/06 - 12/22/06 CallManager System Administration - 5 Days Lab & Lecture Course - Only \$2850 for both classes. Focuses on basic administration of CallManager product and devices that register to Cisco CallManager. 40% hands-on laboratory exercises with best practices to take on-site or back to a lab environment to test prior to deployments. Cisco Unified Communications System Administrator - UCSA v1.3. Designed to produce administrators of Cisco Unity products.

*Events and dates are subject to change. Please contact Quest for registration, location, directions and all other information at 1-800-326-4220, or [events@questsys.com](mailto:events@questsys.com).*

## Quest STRATEGIC ADVISOR

Publisher: Tim Burke  
Editor: Barbara Klide  
Contact the editor at [barbara\\_klide@questsys.com](mailto:barbara_klide@questsys.com)

All contents copyright © 2006 by Quest Media & Supplies, Inc, unless otherwise noted. *Quest Strategic Advisor* is published bimonthly by Quest Media & Supplies, Inc. Information contained in this newsletter is believed to be reliable but cannot be guaranteed to be complete or correct. Quest Media & Supplies, Inc. assumes no liability for any use of this newsletter and/or the information or opinions it contains. *Quest Strategic Advisor* and [questsys.com](http://questsys.com) are trademarks of Quest Media & Supplies, Inc. Other product, service, and company names mentioned herein may be servicemarks, trademarks, or registered trademarks of their respective holders. To the best of Quest's knowledge, cited data and research findings belong to the organizations to which they are attributed and Quest Media & Supplies, Inc. asserts no claim to them.